WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A radial tire comprising a steel cord reinforced carcass ply and an apex of a composition comprised of, based on 100 parts by weight rubber, (A) about 80 to about 97 parts by weight of at least one rubber selected from the group consisting of natural rubber, synthetic cis 1,4-polyisoprene rubber, cis 1,4-polybutadiene rubber; and (B) about 3 to about 20 parts by weight of a trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber having at least a 65 percent trans 1,4-content.

2. The tire of claim 1 wherein said apex composition is comprised of, based on 100 parts by weight rubber, (A) about 90 to about 95 parts by weight of at least one of said diene rubbers, and (B) about 5 to about 10 parts by weight of said trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber.

3. The rubber tire of claim 1 wherein said trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber has a 65 to about a 90 percent trans 1,4-content, a 5 to about a 20 percent 1,2-content and a 2 to about an 15 percent cis 1,4-content and, in its uncured state, a first major melting point in the range of about 35°C to about 45°C and a second minor melting point in the range of about 55°C to about 65°C.

4. The tire of claim 3 wherein from about 80 to about 97 parts by weight is natural rubber.

5. A method of preparing a pneumatic rubber tire having a steel cord reinforced carcass ply and an apex which comprises shaping and curing an uncured pneumatic rubber tire in a mold by pressing said tire outwardly against a mold surface under conditions of

heat and pressure to cause at least the tread rubber of said tire to flow and cure against said mold surface, the improvement comprising the use of a rubber composition in the apex comprised of, based on 100 parts by weight rubber, (A) about 80 to about 97 parts by weight of at least one diene rubber selected from the group consisting of natural rubber, synthetic cis 1,4-polyisoprene rubber, cis 1,4-polybutadiene rubber; and (B) about 3 to about 20 parts by weight of a trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber having at least 65 percent trans 1,4-content.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein said apex rubber composition is comprised of, based on 100 parts by weight rubber, (A) about 90 to about 95 parts by weight of at least one of said diene rubbers, and (B) about 5 to about 10 parts by weight of said trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein said trans 1,4-polybutadiene rubber has a 65 to about a 90 percent trans 1,4-content, a 5 to about a 20 percent 1,2-content and a 2 to about a 15 percent cis 1,4-content and, in its uncured state, a first major melting point in the range of about 35°C to about 45°C and a second minor melting point in the range of about 55°C to about 65°C.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein from about 80 to about 97 parts by weight is natural rubber.